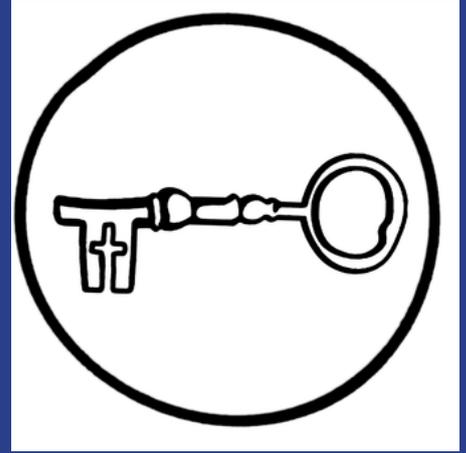

Coton Church of England (VC) Primary School



Headteacher Applicant Pack



The key to learn and flourish
Matthew 16:19



Introduction

Coton Church of England (VC) Primary School is a warm, welcoming and inclusive primary school set in the heart of Coton, serving children from within the village, as well as attracting families from Cambridge and the surrounding areas.

Coton is a very attractive village located 3 miles West of Cambridge and with easy road access, being only one mile from the M11 and A14.

At Coton, our vision leads us to provide children with the keys to learn and flourish, enabling them to thrive and become the best that they can be, in all areas of their life.

We are seeking to appoint a new Headteacher with effect from the 1st of September 2026 to lead our hardworking and enthusiastic staff.

This applicant pack will provide you with further information about our wonderful school, the job role and recruitment process. We do hope that you will apply to join our dedicated team of staff to continue the Coton journey.

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Letter from the Chair of Governors

Dear prospective candidate,

Thank you for taking an interest in the position of Headteacher at Coton Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School. This post is available from 1st September 2026.

We are a small, popular village primary school in the heart of our local community. Our school has a warm and nurturing family environment with dedicated staff, supportive parents and governors and enthusiastic pupils. We have a strong emphasis on pupils and staff wellbeing, and a culture of mutual support between all staff.

Our Headteacher has been in post since April 2023 and has led a period of rapid and remarkable improvement. During her time with us, she has built a strong team, created and embedded a new curriculum and overseen improvements to behaviour, attendance and parental engagement. She has also overseen significant improvements to the premises, including the installation of a brand-new kitchen.

The vacancy provides an opportunity for a new Headteacher, someone who relishes the challenge of leadership in a small school, and who would be able to build on these strong foundations. We are seeking to appoint a Headteacher with demonstrable leadership skills, an enthusiasm for teaching and learning and solid experience across the primary age range. We are looking for an inspirational, forward-thinking, strategic leader who will continue to lead the school with innovation. Our chosen candidate will share and sustain our school's Christian vision, ethos and values.

We provide a full and balanced curriculum, with excellent opportunities in creative subjects, as well as in reading, writing and maths. We are particularly proud of the opportunities that we offer in PE, which is recognised as a strength of the school. Whether academically, socially or emotionally or spiritually, our strong team of dedicated and caring staff have the highest expectations of each individual child in our Coton family.

Coton is a positive and attractive place in which to work. Staff support one another and are well-supported by our leaders. We are fortunate to have such a strong team. Our Governing Body is active and has a good range of skills. We work closely with the Headteacher, and are both active and understanding of the demands on all of our staff.

Please do look at our website: www.coton.cambs.sch.uk to find out more about us and email me at chair@coton.cambs.sch.uk if you have any further questions.

We warmly invite you to visit our school. I am available for such visits in the week of 23rd to 27th March and in addition, on the 15th and 16th April. To arrange a visit, please contact me via the email address above.

With best wishes,

James Edgoose
Chair of Governors



Key information

Coton CE (VC) Primary School is a nurturing, inclusive, and aspirational community where every child is truly known and valued. Though modest in size, we are bold in vision—proudly ambitious, forward-thinking, and deeply committed to providing an enriching, inspiring education that enables each pupil to flourish academically, spiritually, and socially.

Rooted in strong Christian values and sustained by a supportive, dedicated community, our school offers a vibrant, caring environment where high expectations, creativity, and compassion shape all that we do, both within the classroom and beyond.

Ofsted and our school improvement journey

Following our Ofsted inspection in November 2023, the school was rated as ‘Requires Improvement’. However, Leadership and Management was rated as ‘Good’. This reflected the Headteacher’s knowledge of the weaknesses which needed addressing and the work that was being undertaken to make rapid improvement. Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development were also rated as Good.

At Coton, we pride ourselves on our caring and supportive atmosphere, where pupils and adults are respected and celebrated as members of the Coton family. This was evident in our inspection report, which reads:

“Everyone at Coton Church of England Primary School is proud to belong to this caring community. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They live by the school’s ‘5C’ values: care, challenge, courage, creativity and cooperation. Pupils are polite, kind and considerate of others. The school has high expectations for pupils’ behaviour, including for the children in the early years. Pupils respond well to this. They take pride in their learning and listen carefully to their teachers. Pupils feel happy and safe in school because they know the adults will look after them. Pupils enjoy their lessons, saying learning is neither too easy nor too hard. Pupils are encouraged to do their best.”

The full inspection report can be read on our school website under the ‘key information’ tab. However, we are confident that the areas for improvement noted within the report in Quality of Education and Early Years Provision have been thoroughly addressed.

As part of the school improvement process, a rigorous, systematic evaluation and redevelopment of the curriculum has been undertaken, including the development of assessment systems within foundation subjects. Our curriculum is well-sequenced, coherently planned and progressive meaning that the children are well-prepared for future learning both within and beyond our school.

We have also ensured that every teacher has a secure understanding of the EYFS curriculum and that learning opportunities across the school build progressively upon the strong foundations built in our EYFS classroom under the leadership our knowledgeable EYFS Leader.

At the time of writing, we are still awaiting re-inspection before mid May 2026. and have been confident of a being ‘Good’ (or now, ‘Expected Standard’) school for some time.

Beyond the classroom

At Coton, we hold a holistic view of childhood development and always seek to consider how we can best enrich our children’s lives beyond the classroom. At least one educational trip or visitor is organised each term for each class, linked to our themes and topics. Trips and visits have included, residential trips to Grafham Water and Hilltop live folk band performances, Royal Opera House live lessons, the Botanic Gardens, numerous sporting competitions, the cinema, Cambridge Arts Theatre pantomime, Hammerton Zoo, Sedgwick Museum and Fitzwilliam Museum, the British Museum in London and even a visit from a Viking from the Yorvik Centre.

Despite having a small staff team, we run a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, which are further enhanced by the generosity of our wider community in giving up their time.

Whether it be shooting on the netball pitch, crafting beautiful pieces in jewellery club, getting creative in the kitchen or singing around the piano, we are passionate about providing a vast array of activities for our children so that they can find their own passions and have experiences that they may not have the opportunity to do otherwise. We also celebrate the children’s wider lives during our celebration worship on Fridays, ensuring that children understand that learning does not occur in the classroom alone.

SIAMS and Church School distinctiveness

As a Church of England school, we are proud to recognise the historic foundation of our school. As part of this, we benefit from links with the Diocese of Ely, CSOC (Church Schools of Cambridge) and other local groups such as the GenR8 team as well as the local Church team. These organisations support us in meeting the Church of England’s vision for education - to provide life in all its fullness (John 10:10) For us, this means a relentless focus on the development of the whole child. Please see the vision, values and ethos page for further details.

We benefit greatly from our excellent relationship with the local Church. Joint ventures include Reverend Claire’s popular choir club, in which children rehearse to sing at church events; events such as Easter, Harvest and the Christmas Carol services taking place in the Church and being well-supported; deep conversations in RE supported by our curate, Reverend Barnabas; regular Collective Worship visits and a monthly Sunday children’s service, which takes place in our school hall.

Our most recent SIAMS inspection was in March 2019, and the overall judgement is good. The report is available on our website. We are expecting to have our next SIAMS inspection during the academic year starting in September 2026.

Inclusion

Extensive work has been undertaken during our recent school improvement journey to improve our inclusion provision.

Our HLTA undertakes the role of our school ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) and supports a wide range of children across our school. We also benefit from a very experienced SENDco who works for 1.5 days per week.

Our most recent aptGO (SEND audit) demonstrated the exceptionally high standard of our SEND and inclusion provision. At Coton, the entire team collaborate to ensure that every pupil can be successful, be recognised for their success and be supported in their next steps.

Location

Situated just 3 west of the vibrant and historic city of Cambridge, the village of Coton offers an excellent blend of rural beauty and urban accessibility - with great transport links to the M11 and A14.

School environment

At Coton, we currently run a 4 class structure with an additional classroom used as a breakout room within school hours and to host our wraparound care provision. Currently, part of our school building and grounds are leased to an external nursery provider.

Although a small school, we have a well-stocked library, hall, and use our limited spaces well, to enable us to meet the needs of our children. We appreciate the value of learning outside of the classroom and embrace opportunities to use our outdoor facilities to their best effect.

At Coton, we strongly promote physical activity. The school has large grounds backing on to open fields, and also a ‘wild garden’ adjacent to the site. We have a heated, open-air swimming pool, which is used in the summer and is very popular with our children.

Key information continued

The School has recently undertaken a major project to bring its kitchen up to modern standards, thus enabling us to have our school meals cooked on site after more than a decade of off-site delivery of lunches. The new kitchen will open on the first day of the summer term. We are delighted to be able to do this, both to improve quality and control costs.



As of January 2026, the school operates its own wraparound care, both before and after the school day. This is also a very welcome development and has been well received by parents.

Our staff team

Our current team comprises a Head Teacher, five class teachers including our Deputy Head Teacher, a SENDco who works 1.5 days per week, and nine Teaching Assistants (both part time and full time roles). Visiting Spanish and PE teachers provide specialist lessons. We are supported by our School Business Manager and an administrative assistant, 3 midday supervisors, 2 wraparound care practitioners and a catering manager.

We highly value CPD for our staff and we support and encourage both internal and external training, keenly supporting staff through qualifications that have previously included masters degrees and NPQSL and NPQH qualifications.

Our pupils

We place great value on our pupils' opinions and their input into the school. We encourage them to think independently and we listen to their views.

This year, we have extended and enhanced our pupil leadership provision by introducing House Leadership Teams. These comprise of two Year 6 House Captains and a junior House Captain from each younger year group. These children were elected by their house teams (Gallant Griffins, Phenomenal Phoenixes and Dynamic Dragons).

Throughout the year, the teams have a varied and exciting role and have the opportunity to be involved in all areas of school life, including: leading and organising sporting events, meeting important visitors, attending meetings with their team, providing leadership during house events (e.g. Sports Day and Science Week) and supporting the headteacher in the continued development of our school.

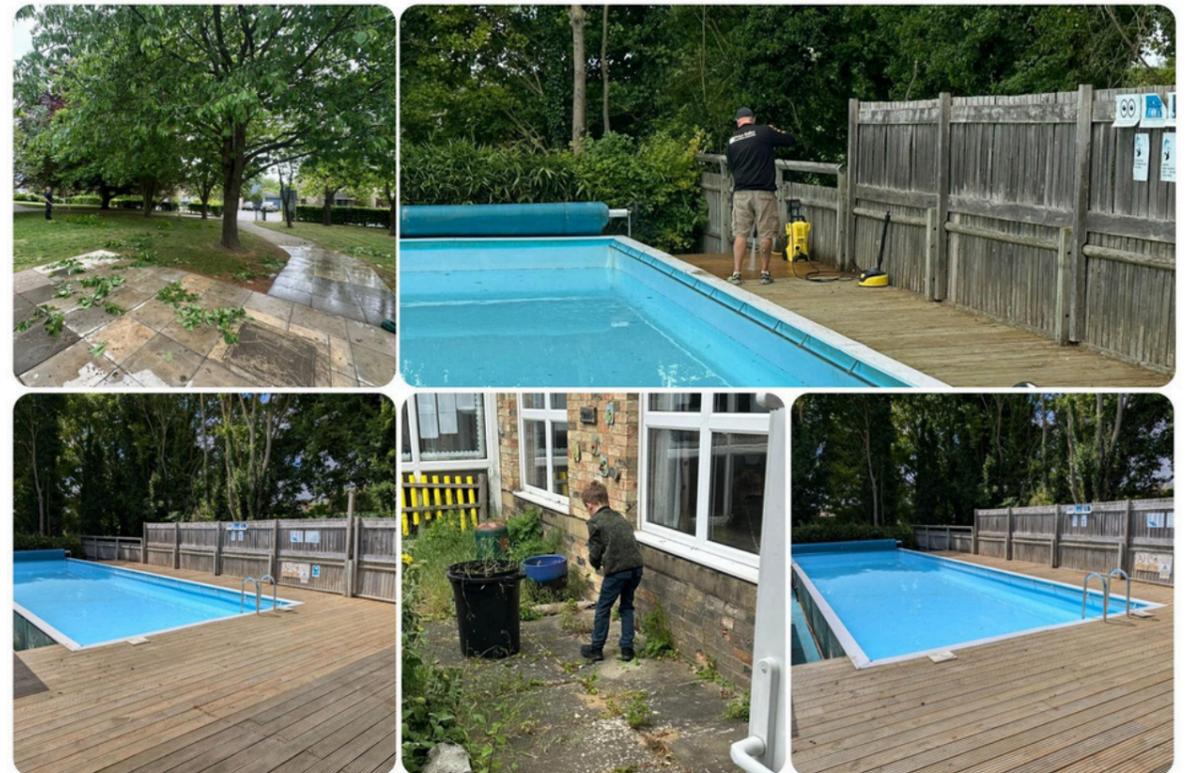
All children are allocated to a house on joining Coton Primary School. Houses provide an incentive for children to work hard, both for their House as well as themselves, as they are able to earn House points for demonstrating our school values, school rules and STAR learning behaviours. A number of activities take place in Houses including Sports Day.

Finance

At Coton, we manage our finances prudently so as to have the greatest impact on pupils learning. We monitor spending very closely and have a good deal of experience available to us from staff and Finance Governors. Whilst it is very difficult for schools not to lose money due to budgetary constraints and difficulties across Cambridgeshire in respect of High Needs funding, we expect to be able to set a break-even budget for 2026/27.

Our PSFA and wider community

We have an active and well-organised Parents and Friends Association (PFSA). They organise a number of events during the year, including very popular Summer and Christmas Fairs. The PFSA has contributed generously to all our recent projects, such as the new kitchen, and supports the cost of maintaining our swimming pool.



Key Statistics

Age range: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Type of school: Voluntary Controlled

Number of children on roll: 96

Staff: Headteacher, class teachers x5

(including Deputy Head Teacher) Teaching assistants x9 (a mixture of part and full time), School Business Manager and administrative assistant (part time), 3x midday supervisors, 2x wraparound care practitioners and a catering manager (from April 2026)

Classes: Owl (12): EYFS, Otter (25): Year 1 and Year 2, Hedgehog (29): Year 3 and Year 4, Kestrel (30) Year 5 and Year 6

Attendance:

2022/23 = 94.1%

2023/24 = 95.0%

2024/25 = 96.1% (1.5% above national average)

Number of EHCPs: 3

% of children with SEN: 17%

% of children with EAL: 32.29%

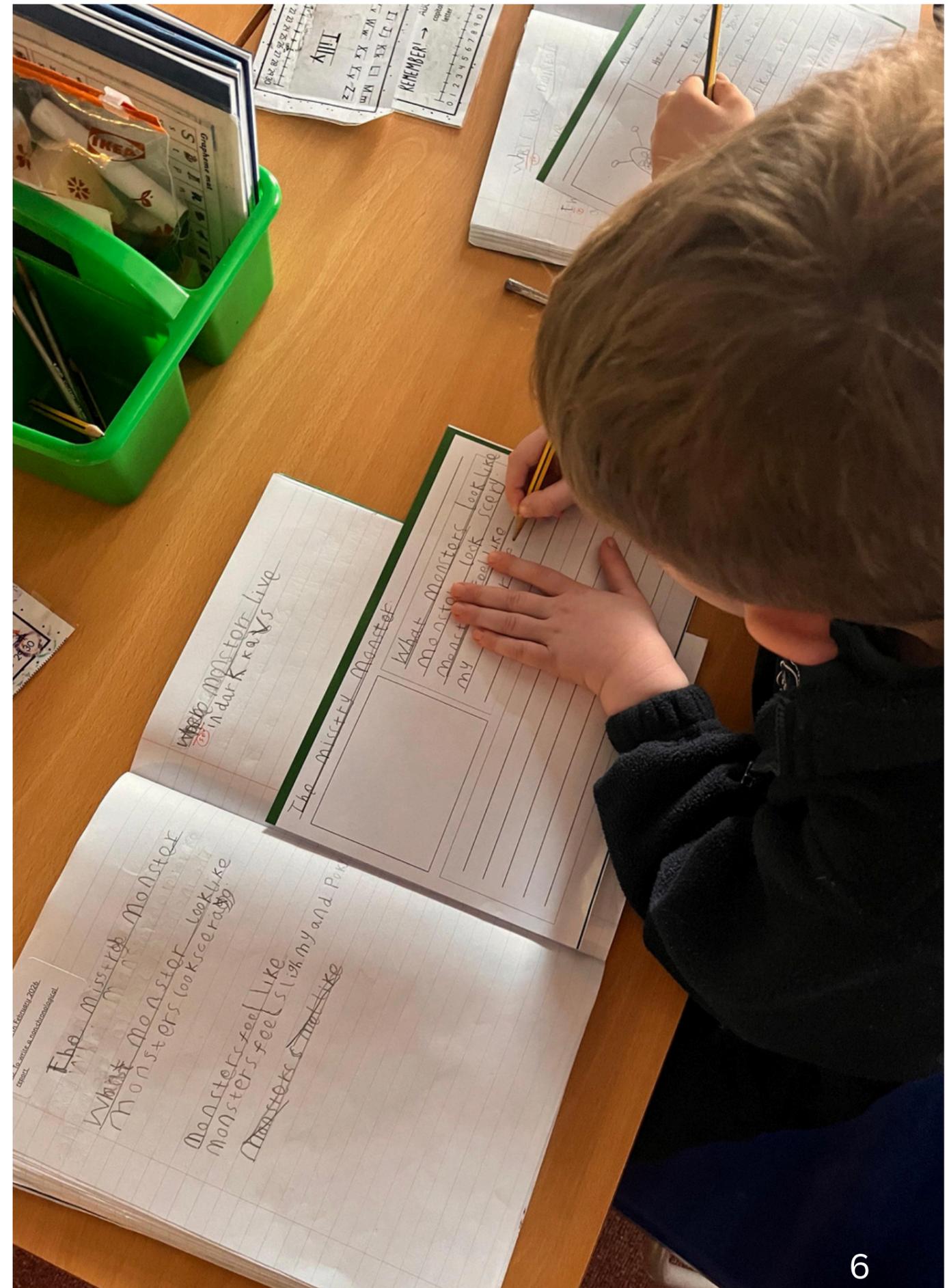
% of pupil premium: 14%

National test results 2024 - 2025

EYFS good level of development - 77%

Year 1 phonics check - 100%

	Reading	Writing	Maths	RWM combined
Expected standard	81%	48%	76%	43%
Greater depth	33%	14%	43%	14%



Our vision, values and ethos



The key to learn and flourish
Matthew 16:19

Our Vision

As a church school at the heart of the community, Coton C of E (VC) Primary School is committed to offering all individuals the keys they need to learn and flourish, enabling them to thrive and become the best that they can be. As Jesus 'gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Saint Peter,' (Matthew 16:19), we recognise that keys do more than open doors: they unlock potential, bind us to responsibility and enable untold opportunities for growth. We are passionate about growing together in compassion, courage, cooperation and creativity, embracing challenge.

Our Values

Our school is a caring and inspiring community where everyone is valued and encouraged to thrive. Guided by compassion, we nurture kindness and respect for others. We celebrate creativity and curiosity, inspiring pupils to explore new ideas. Through courage, we support our children to try their best and learn from mistakes. Cooperation helps us to work together and support one another whilst challenge motivates every learning to grow, achieve and reach their full potential.



Our Ethos

Coton C of E Primary School is a Christian foundation and our approach to the education that we provide for our pupils is based on the beliefs and values exemplified in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. The school's Christian ethos is formally described in the Instrument of Governance as follows:

“Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.”



What our children would like applicants to know.

At Coton, our children are at the heart of our decision making. When compiling the information for this pack, we asked all of our children some questions about our school and what qualities they would like to see in their new headteacher. Here is what the children would like you to know.

Coton is special because ...

- People are kind to each other
- People will make you feel like you belong here
- We all have lots of friends
- We feel safe
- It is a Church of England school
- We have a swimming pool
- We have a reasonable amount of rules
- We have a wild garden
- Coton feels like one big family
- Teachers make lessons fun
- We do loads of fun stuff like clubs after school
- We get to do lots of learning activities and phonics

At school, we enjoy ...

- Every lesson
- Play leaders games
- When Mrs Harvey (our HLTA and ELSA lead) teaches us
- All the events/trips we do
- Quite reading times
- Spanish
- Sports like Netball & football
- The teachers
- The resources – i.e. the wooden blocks
- Busy Learning time (EYFS continuous / enhanced provision)
- PE



We would like our new headteacher to ...

- Do activities with us – play with us at playtimes
- Greet us (say good morning / good bye)
- Have fun
- Keep us safe
- Come and visit our classroom regularly (lots of times)
- Come on school trips with us
- Watch a film with us during wet lunch time play
- Let us have music when we are on the field
- Care for us
- Sometimes give us extra playtime
- Give us even more time to read

We think Coton could be improved by ...

- Giving us more swimming lessons
- Stopping homework
- Making a 'rock and roll' room so we can play guitar when we want to
- Removing the stinging nettles in the car park
- Giving us more learning time with other classes
- Giving us more trim trail time



What our staff would like applicants to know.

What is it like to work at Coton CE Primary School?

- Brilliant, there is a really strong sense of community and positive relationships across the school.
- We are a team! We value each other and are happy to support each other wherever needed.

What qualities does our next headteacher need to have?

- A strong commitment to inclusion so that pupils with SEND feel supported, valued and able to achieve their potential.
- Someone who has excellent communication skills and is able to engage with staff, pupils, parents, governors, and external partners.
- Has a good sense of humour, is approachable and builds trust and strong relationships with all members of the school community.

What do you feel anybody applying needs to be aware of?

- As a small school, staff work closely together and collaborate to support pupils with additional needs.
- There can be fewer resources than in larger schools, so creativity and strategic thinking are essential.

What are the strengths and areas for development in the school?

- Strengths: A caring and inclusive environment where children are known well as individuals.
- Areas to develop: Continuing to embed the good practice already in place and building on recent developments.

Job Description

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff to share this commitment. The Headteacher will carry out their professional duties in accordance with and subject to the national conditions of employment for Headteachers, the provisions of all applicable legislation, and any orders and regulations having effect under the applicable legislation.

The Headteacher will be responsible to the Governing Body for the conduct, management and administration of the school, subject to any rules, regulations or policies made either by the Governing Body on matters for which it is responsible, or by another authority with respect to matters for which the Governing Body is not responsible, or by Central Government. This job description will be reviewed on an annual basis.

1. Principal Accountabilities 1. Whole School Organisation and Strategy 1.1. Provide overall strategic leadership and direction. Collaborate with others to lead, develop and support the direction, vision, values and priorities of the school. 1.2. Advise and assist the Governing Body in the exercise of its functions. 1.3. Draft the school development plan for consideration by the Governing Body. 1.4. Develop, implement and monitor the school's policies, practices and procedures.

2. Teaching 2.1. Lead and manage teaching and learning throughout the school, including ensuring, save in exceptional circumstances, that a teacher is assigned in the school timetable to every class or group of pupils. 2.2. Participate, to such an extent as may be appropriate having regard to other duties, in the teaching of pupils at the school, including the provision of cover for absent teachers.

3. Management of Curriculum and Pupils 3.1. Determine, implement and review the curriculum to ensure breadth, balance and relevance to all pupils whatever their abilities, aptitudes and needs. 3.2. Determine, implement and monitor systems for monitoring and improving pupils' attainment and progress. 3.3. Determine and implement standards of behaviour and discipline. 3.4. Promote and ensure the safety and well-being of pupils.

4. Management of Staff 4.1. Lead, manage and develop staff, including appraising and managing performance. 4.2. Establish an appropriate staff structure and define staff tasks, responsibilities and job descriptions. Organise and deploy staffing resources within the school. 4.3. Participate in and advise the Governing Body on the selection and appointment of high quality staff. 4.4. Develop and implement policies and procedures for staff development, appraisal and support. 4.5. Have a proper regard for staff well-being and legitimate expectations, including the expectation of a healthy balance between work and other commitments.

5. Professional Development 5.1. Promote the participation of staff in relevant continuing professional development. 5.2. Participate in arrangements for the appraisal and review of your own performance and, where appropriate, that of other staff. 5.3. Participate in arrangements for your own further training and professional development and, where appropriate, that of other staff.

6. Management of Resources 6.1. Take overall responsibility for the management of the school's financial, physical and information resources. 6.2. Determine short, medium and long term priorities for the school, having regard to any financial implications and the ability to meet these from foreseen income. 6.3. Ensure the development, maintenance, security and safety of the school buildings, grounds and equipment.

7. Communication and Collaboration 7.1. Consult and communicate with the Governing Body, staff, pupils, parents and carers. 7.2. Establish and maintain effective communication and relationships with colleagues and other relevant professionals within and beyond the school, including relevant external agencies and bodies, and organisations representing staff. 7.3. Represent the school to other groups and the local community, and promote links with other local schools. 7.4. Support and encourage the involvement of parents in the life and work of the school through the medium of the Parent Teacher Association and by other appropriate means.

Person Specification

Person Specification		Essential	Desirable
1	Qualifications		
1.1	Qualified Teacher Status	x	
1.2	Degree or equivalent	x	
1.3	Evidence of recent, relevant professional development related to leadership and management	x	
1.4	National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)		x
2	Experience		
2.1	Proven successful whole school management and leadership experience, including staff development and leadership of CPD	x	
2.2	Successful and sustained track record as an outstanding classroom teacher with at least 3 years' recent experience of providing excellent teaching and with knowledge of both Primary Key Stages and EYFS	x	
2.3	Proven skills in strategic thinking, leading to effective planning and delivery against strategic improvement plans	x	
2.4	Working with staff and governors to develop the school's ethos, values, vision and objectives		x
2.5	Development of effective curriculum initiatives and whole school integration of these	x	
2.6	Securing excellent outcomes through an understanding of pedagogy, ensuring assessment of learning is accurate and informs planning	x	
2.7	Effective listener with excellent oral and written communication skills with pupils, staff, parents and governors	x	
2.8	Successful management of budgets and other resources using sound financial management practices to procure services and ensure best value of the school's resources		x
2.9	Experience of working collaboratively with other schools and organisations to secure improvement		x
2.10	Experience of working as a school governor, supporting the Headteacher and governing body in setting strategy and holding the Headteacher to account		x

3	Knowledge and Skills		
3.1	Thorough understanding of safeguarding and proven experience of promoting and supporting pupils' mental wellbeing with up to date DSL training.	x	
3.2	Understanding and commitment to inclusion and to the promotion of positive outcomes for pupils with SEND	x	
3.3	Strong understanding of effective approaches in managing individual behaviour needs within the whole school community	x	
4	Personal Qualities		
4.1	Resilient, robust and calm under pressure, showing creativity and imagination in response to changing circumstances with a positive, solution-focused approach	x	
4.2	Passionate about providing a broad, creative and rich learning environment and experience	x	
4.3	Approachable and enjoys being highly visible to pupils, staff and parents	x	
4.4	Display professional and personal reliability, integrity and respect, working well as part of a team and as an individual	x	
5	Leadership and Management		
5.1	Ability to communicate a clear sense of direction for this Church School and its development focusing on excellence, high standards and meeting the needs of all	x	
5.2	Commitment to supporting, promoting and developing the school's Christian ethos and values across the curriculum and through all aspects of school life, in line with the Church of England's vision for education	x	
5.3	An engaging leadership style with the ability to encourage, nurture and motivate others and to inspire pupils, parents, staff and the wider community around the vision for the school	x	
5.4	Value and develop a culture which celebrates success for all members of the school community	x	
5.5	Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice; ensure areas for development are addressed and good practice is shared	x	
5.6	Model excellence in behaviour, professional conduct and relationships at all times and in managing workload and wellbeing	x	
5.7	Manage complaints, conflicts and divisions sensitively and constructively to achieve resolution	x	

Support for new headteachers

Should the successful candidate be new to headship there will be a variety of support available for our new Headteacher. The Local Authority offers a “New Headteacher’s Induction Programme” including CPD, leadership forums and allocation of an experienced Headteacher as mentor. There will also be support from the local CB23 Network of schools. This is in addition to the support from the school’s allocated LA School Improvement Adviser and Ely Diocese Regional Adviser (EDRA).

The Governing Body is well aware of the very demanding workload on headteachers at all times, and will carefully consider ways to address this.

Coton C of E Primary School has, in the past, been a pioneer of co-headship and is open to innovative models of leadership, including considering flexible working arrangements for suitable candidates. This can be discussed at any point with the Chair of Governors.





Process & Dates

The vacancy for a Headteacher is to start on 1st September 2026. The salary range for this post is L8 to L14. Your application form should be completed with reference to the Job Description and Person Specification. CVs will not be accepted. The selection panel will take into consideration the qualifications and skills of each applicant as well as experience and personal attributes.

Key dates:

The closing date for applications will be 12 noon on Monday 20th April 2026.

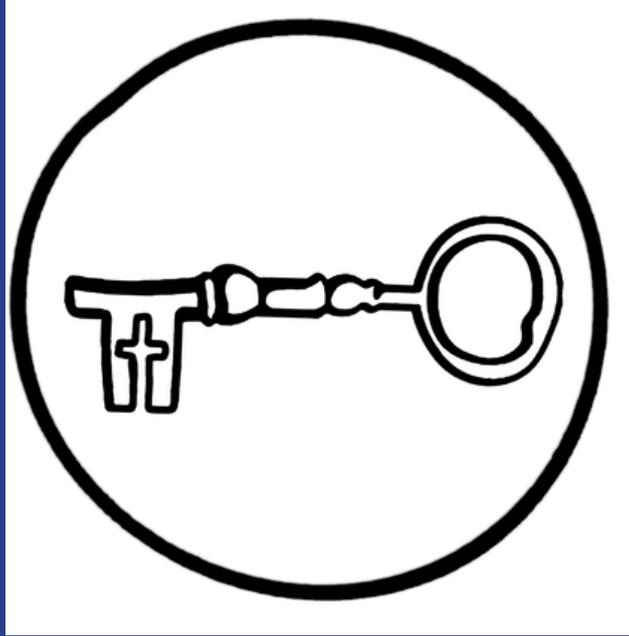
Shortlisting of Applicants will be on Monday 20th or Tuesday 21st April 2026.

Interviews will be held on Thursday 30th April 2026.

Visits to school are warmly welcomed in the week of 23rd - 27th March 2026 or on the 15th or 16th of April. To arrange a visit, please contact our Chair of Governors, James Edgoose, by email (details above) copying in the School Office on office@coton.cambs.sch.uk (or phone 01223 210339).

Coton CE Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Appointment to this post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check as well as other pre-employment checks and references outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025. Applicants should note that written references will be taken up at the shortlisting stage prior to interview.





COTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

In the same way that...



Jesus

gave St



Peter

the



keys

to the



Kingdom

of



Heaven...

(Matthew 16:19)

at Coton C of E (VC) Primary School, we are given...



... the

keys

we need to



learn



and



flourish

so that...



...we can be the

best

we can be!